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APPLICATION NUMBER: 60/409,914

FILING DATE: September 11, 2002

RELATED PCT APPLICATION NUMBER: PCT/US03/28777

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PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT COVER SHEET

This is a request for filing a PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT under 37 CFR §1.53(c).

INVENTOR(S)		
Given Name (first and middle [if any])	Family Name or Surname	Residence (City and either State or Foreign Country)
David	Hulbert	Portland, ME
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional inventors are being named on the 0 separately numbered sheets attached hereto.		
TITLE OF THE INVENTION (280 characters max)		
SURVIVAL/UTILITY DINGHY		
CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS		
Direct all correspondence to:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Customer Number:		Place Customer Number Bar Code Label Here
OR		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Firm or Individual Name	Fish & Richardson P.C.	
Address	225 Franklin Street Boston, Massachusetts 02110-2804	
Country	United States	Telephone (617) 542-5070 Fax (617) 542-8906
ENCLOSED APPLICATION PARTS (check all that apply)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specification	Number of Pages 4	<input type="checkbox"/> CD(S), Number
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s)	Number of Sheets 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) Abstract of the Disclosure
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Data Sheet. See 37 CFR 1.76.		
METHOD OF PAYMENT OF FILING FEES FOR THIS PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT (check one)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicant Claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27.		FILING FEE AMOUNT (\$)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A check or money order is enclosed to cover the filing fees.		\$80
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge filing fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number: 06-1050		
<input type="checkbox"/> Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.		
The invention was made by an agency of the United States Government or under a contract with an agency of the United States Government.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the name of the U.S. Government agency and the Government contract number are:		

Respectfully submitted,


Signature

Name Timothy A. French, Reg. No. 30,175

Date September 11, 2002

Telephone No. (617) 542-5070

Docket No. 04405-003P02
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Attorney's Docket No.: 04405-003P01

PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT

under

37 CFR §1.53(c)

TITLE: SURVIVAL/UTILITY DINGHY

APPLICANT: DAVID HULBERT

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Survival/Utility Dinghy

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to dinghies, and more particularly to dinghies to be carried or towed for use by sailboats and powerboats. This provisional patent application is related to my
5 earlier provisional patent application, Serial No. 60/322,926, filed September 17, 2001, now abandoned, of this same title, the complete disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND

Many boaters find it necessary to tow or carry a dinghy, e.g., for access between offshore
10 mooring and a dock or shore. Traditional rigid dinghies may be formed of wood, plastic or fiberglass; inflatable dinghies are also employed. When swamped, rigid dinghies are usually designed and constructed to remain minimally afloat, but often fill completely with water. The water cannot be pumped out, and it makes the dinghy difficult or impossible to row, and extended exposure to cold water is hazardous and can be fatal. The popular rubber inflatable
15 dinghy, filled with air, is subject to puncture and leaks, and it is not aesthetically pleasing. Inflatable life rafts are very expensive, take up space, and they are designed to be static in the water, i.e., not sailed or rowed.

SUMMARY

According to the present invention, a survival/utility dinghy, e.g., for use with a sailboat
20 or powerboat, is lightweight, rigid, durable, and easily towed and rowed. It has a very high permanent flotation capability, e.g., comparable only to some life rafts.

Preferred embodiments of survival dinghies of the invention may include one or more of the following additional features. The dinghy has an outer shell of rotation-molded polyethylene or other suitable plastic, similar to molded kayaks. The shell has one or more interior chambers
25 filled with rigid foam to provide flotation, even if the shell is punctured. The dinghy has a center seat mounted to be flipped from a centered position to a position toward the bow, thereby to allow a rower more legroom. Grab lines are mounted to the top deck, e.g., as provided in some life raft designs. The shell defines one or more inner, watertight storage chambers (e.g., two

chambers, each about one cubic foot in capacity) for safety equipment and other supplies. A recessed space, with a transom plate of wood or bent metal, is provided in the stern for mounting of an outboard motor. The dinghy is self-draining when empty, with a removable plug. An additional kit may be provided to make the dinghy sailable. The dinghy shell can be matched as
5 desired, e.g., to PMS color charts.

A survival/utility dinghy of the invention thus offers a higher degree of safety than provided by traditional rigid and inflatable dinghies, and at a reasonable cost, i.e., significant below the cost of most inflatable life rafts and dinghies.

The details of one or more embodiments of the invention are set forth in the accompanying drawings and the description below. Other features, objects, and advantages of the
10 invention will be apparent from the description and drawings.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a survival/utility dinghy of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a top plan view of the survival/utility dinghy of FIG. 1;

15 FIG. 3 is a side section view of the survival/utility dinghy of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an end section view of the survival/utility dinghy of FIG. 1, taken at the line 4-4 of FIG. 3;

FIG. 5 is a front plan view of the survival/utility dinghy of FIG. 1, taken at the line 5-5 of FIG. 3; and

20 FIG. 6 is another cross sections view of the central portion of the survival/utility dinghy of FIG. 1, taken generally along the keel and showing the center flip seat for rowing; and FIG. 7 is an end section view of the flip seat.

FIG. 8 is a somewhat diagrammatic view of an adjustable oarlock position for rowing; and FIG. 9 is a perspective view of an oar for rowing or for use as a rudder.

25 FIG. 10 is an end section view of the deck surface of the survival/utility dinghy showing the self-draining port.

Like reference symbols in the various drawings indicate like elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring to FIGS. 1-10, an improved survival/utility dinghy is shown in the
30 accompanying sketches with annotations to specific features and options that might be provided

in a preferred embodiment. Specific features may include an outer shell, e.g., about 1/8-inch thick, or more, of rotation-molded, UV-resistant polyethylene or other suitable plastic (similar to molded kayaks), matched, as desired, to PMS color charts. The shell may have one or more interior chambers filled with rigid foam, providing flotation even if the shell is punctured, with
5 one or more inner, watertight storage chambers for safety equipment and other supplies. A recessed space, with a transom plate of wood or bent metal, may be provided in the stern for mounting of an outboard motor. The dinghy may have a center seat mounted to be flipped from a centered position to a position toward the bow, thereby to allow a rower more legroom. Tie mounts molded to the top gunwales may mount grab lines to the top deck, e.g. as provided in
10 some life raft designs. The grab lines may be designed to be pulled into a boarding ladder. The dinghy may also be self-draining when empty, with a removable plug. The inside floor and top gunwales also have a textured, slip-resistant surface.

A number of embodiments of the invention have been described. Nevertheless, it will be understood that various modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope
15 of the invention. For example, an additional kit may be provided, and stored in the dinghy, to make the dinghy sailable, with the shell defining dagger board slots in one or both side sections, and a sleeve-lined mast hole with cap in the bow section. A bumper strip may be molded or attached about the periphery of the shell. Accordingly, other embodiments are within the scope of the invention.

Attorney Docket No.: 04405-003P02

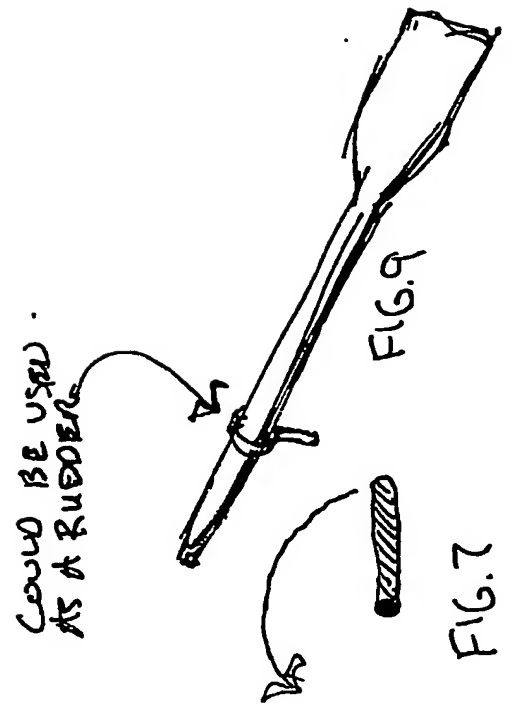
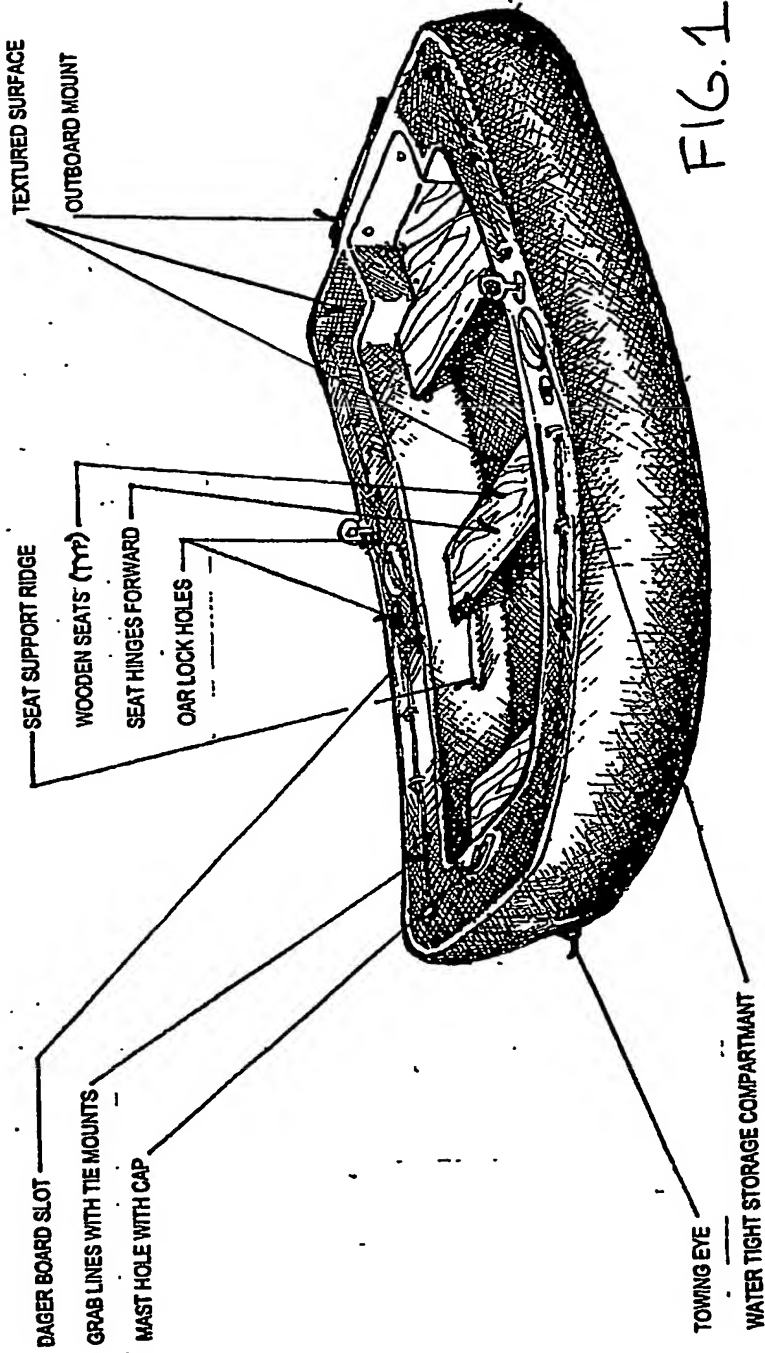
ABSTRACT

A survival/utility dinghy for use, e.g., with a sailboat or powerboat, has flotation capacity comparable to a life raft, and it is designed and constructed to be lightweight, rigid, durable, and easily towed and rowed.

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Appln No.: 60/322,926
Applicant(s): David Hulbert
SURVIVAL/UTILITY DINGHY



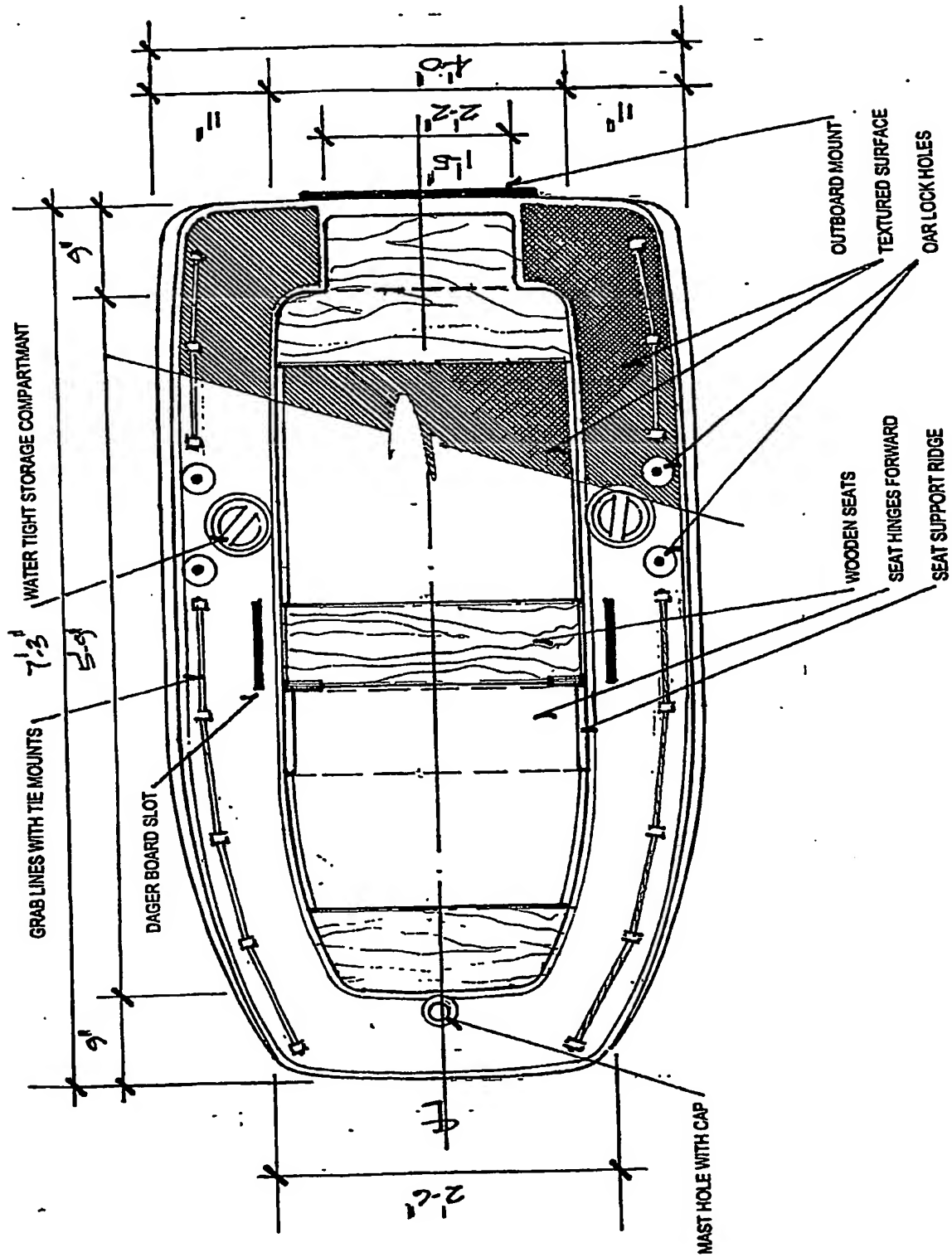
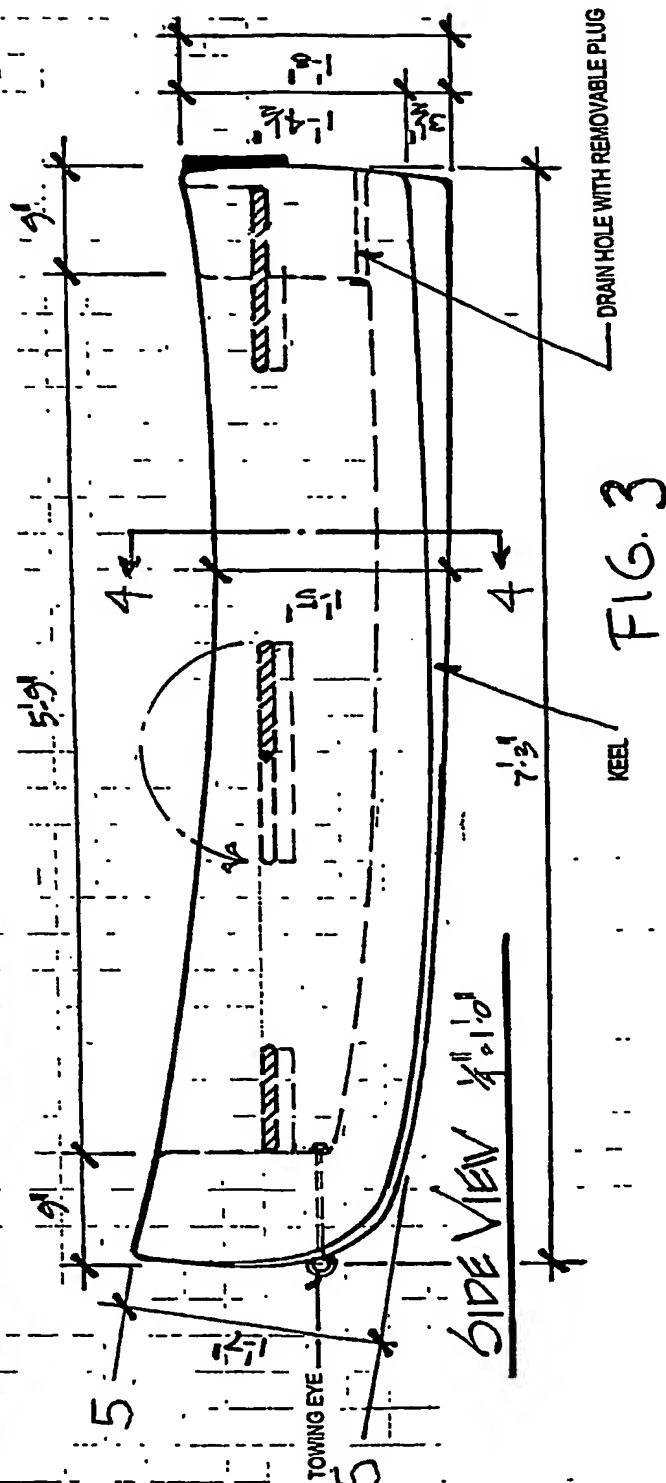
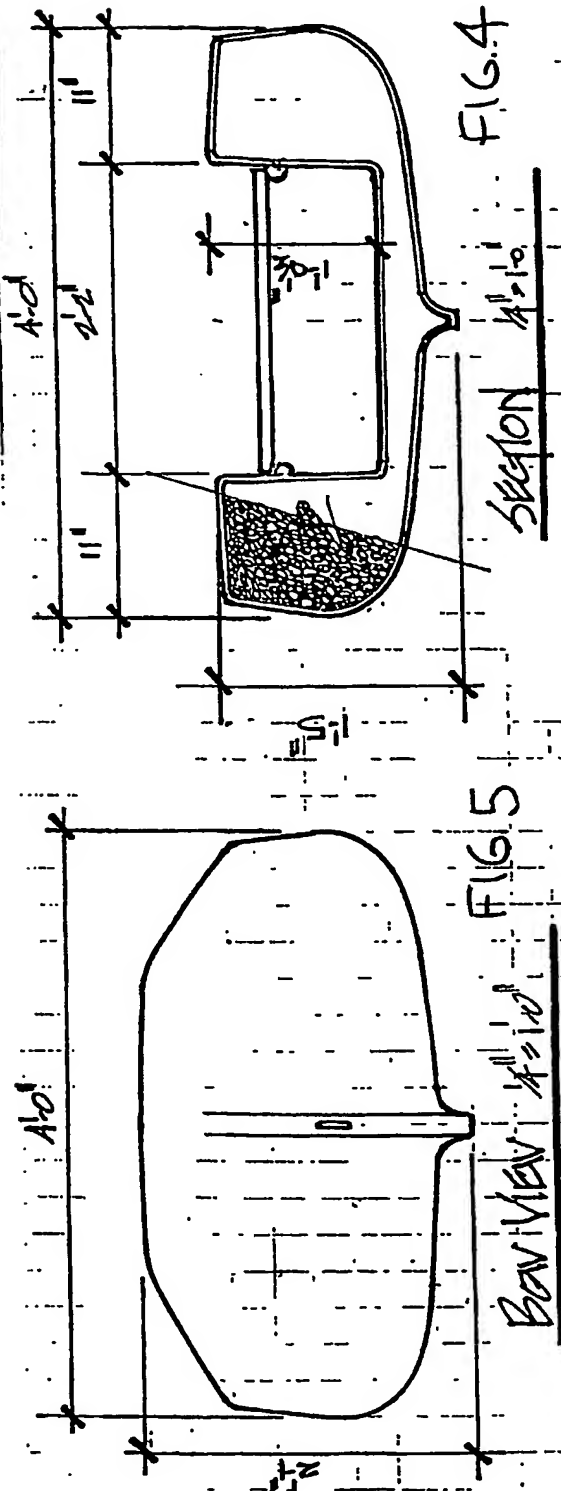


FIG. 2



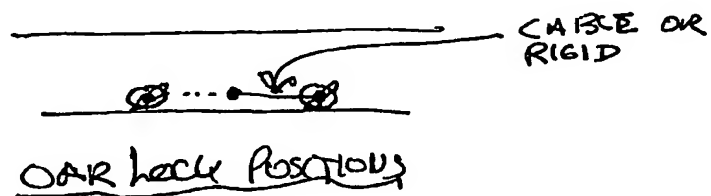
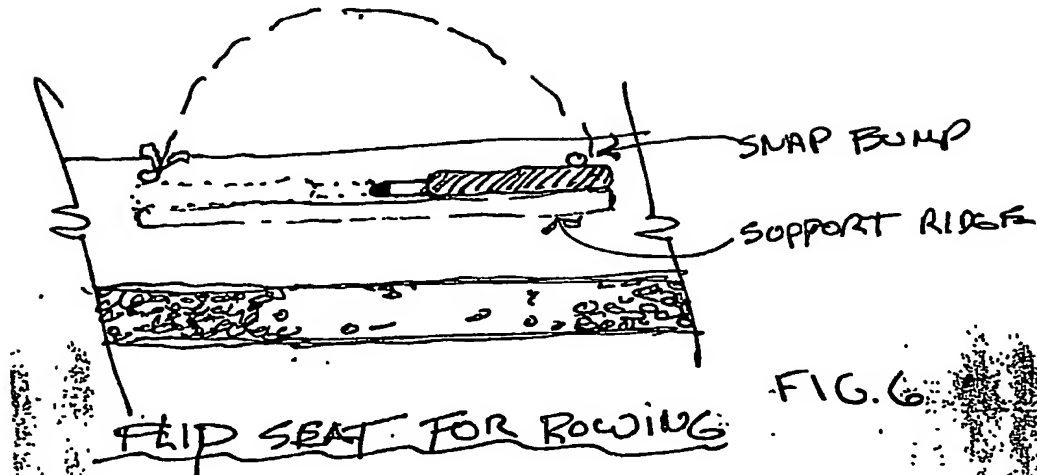
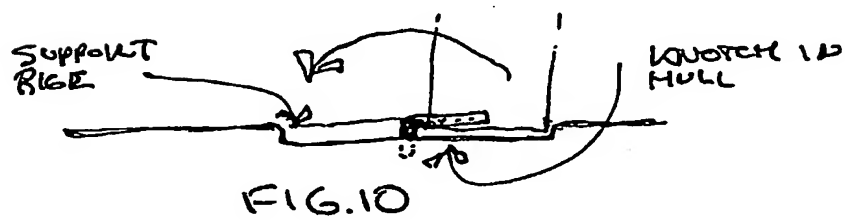


FIG. 8



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